

Private

13 late June
Thursday night

My dear Devin

You asked me on Saturday to give you
my honest impression on the Shakespeare
university & I had done so etc
this, had I not been overwhelmed with
other business.

Now I must premise that there is only
one of the documents which have been questioned
of which I have any personal knowledge
- therefore - of this alone, can I speak
with any degree of certainty. This is
the Folio of 1632 - I saw the volume
twice. while at the Museum - once
accidentally before I had heard anything
about it - a second time, when I
went to look at it more closely forming
my own satisfaction - On this second
occasion

- I must state that I did distinctly see
without any glass - for I had none -
- (1) a number of words written in ink
 - (2) a number of pencil marks, crosses
scratches &c
 - (3) some pencil words corresponding with
and nearly in a line with the same words
written in ink
 - (4) In a few cases words in ink or perhaps
words written over ^{and} other ~~or~~ the same
words written in pencil -

I don't remember having noticed any
peculiar archaisms - or any distinction
of spelling between the one class & the
other. But this I did see quite
clearly, that many of the pencil words
were written in a clear Modern hand
- quite as Modern as my own -
while all those in ink - or nearly all

had a cramped appearance - either suggesting that they were much older than the pencil words - or else were intended to appear so.

From these general facts - I draw the conclusion that the ~~older~~ modern pencil words were intended as a guide to whoever wrote the Inked ones - & that the latter are therefore not coeval or nearly coeval with the printed portion of the book.

I cannot get over the fact that the inked words in some instances are certainly written over the pencil ones & that the pencil words so written over, are as modern in every respect, as those which remain in some cases in the side of the lines, not written over or rubbed out -

I give no opinion whatever as to how
these effects were produced nor as who
was the producer of them — but that
the facts are as I state, I am positively
sure — as I think I said on

Saturday — the only fair way of determining
whether or not the same hand as
manipulated the conclusions in the folios
of 1632, presumed the same writings in
Lord Ellesmere folios of 1623, — or the
State paper and other documents
quoted in the recent discussion —
is to empanel a jury of Palaeographers,
who should, under oath, examine
each of the documents side by side.

Such a jury might be composed of
such men as the following: W.
Lemon — Mr. Bond (who so far as
I know has expressed no opinion on these
questions)